



Work-based Learning Program

for People with Disabilities

Business Guide





Texas Workforce Solutions is comprised of the Texas Workforce Commission, 28 local workforce development boards and our service-providing partners. Together we provide workforce, education, training and support services, including vocational rehabilitation assistance for the people of Texas.



Of the approximately 28 million people in Texas, more than 13 million work in businesses like yours. As a state, Texas has the second largest number of people with disabilities: more than 3 million (or 11.7 percent of the population).¹ In 2014, close to 22 percent of all people with disabilities in Texas were employed, while around 38 percent of Texans with disabilities aged 18 to 64 years old were employed. The average age of employed Texans with a disability is 48.6.

¹Source: U.S. Census 2012 1-year American Community Survey (ACS) and Texas State Data Center current population (Scenario 1.0 released in 2014)

The Texas Workforce Solutions-Vocational Rehabilitation Services (TWS-VRS) and San Antonio Lighthouse for the Blind and Visually Impaired (Lighthouse) want to help your business get the job done through our Work-based Learning Program.



Through this program, you get a trainee with a disability to meet your workforce needs and help your business succeed. Our trainees

get hands-on employment experience with your business after receiving vocational rehabilitation (VR) services to prepare them for employment.

Benefits to your business:

- Qualified and talented volunteer employees
- Increased diversity and innovation
- Motivated team members
- Eager volunteer employees willing to learn
- A strong return on your human resources investment

This program is offered at no cost to your business. Trainees are temporary, part-time employees of the Lighthouse, and their job is to provide volunteer services to businesses like yours to help you carry out your mission and attain your goals.

Trainees are placed with your business based on their skills and abilities. The location and length of the placement is determined in partnership with you.

Trainees are fully covered with workers compensation insurance, and you can rely on the Lighthouse and TWS-VRS to help with any technical questions or needs while hosting one of our trainees.



Program overview

Screening: All trainees are screened before we place them with your business to ensure they are a good fit. Screening includes:

- Completion of an electronic job application
- Verification of ability to work in the United States
- Criminal background check
- Drug screening
- Transportation arrangements to and from host site

Workers compensation liability: For each trainee working at one of your business' duty stations, you will be provided a certificate of workers compensation coverage by the Lighthouse's insurance carrier.

Wages: Each trainee will be issued a biweekly paycheck by the Lighthouse, based on the hours volunteered and the work performed for your business.

Job coaching: Qualified trainees will receive on-site job coaching (or employment specialist services) in coordination with the site manager at no cost to your business. These services are based on the needs of the trainee and requirements of the duty station, and ensure that the trainee accomplishes essential job functions. The job coach will follow up with trainees until they have the skills to perform tasks independently. Trainees receive:

- Hands-on, short-term training on job skills.
- Help with issues such as transportation or soft skills.
- Help completing host site orientation programs.

Reasonable accommodation: For qualified trainees that require reasonable accommodations, TWS-VRS and the Lighthouse will help you establish accommodations throughout the trainee's placement with your business.

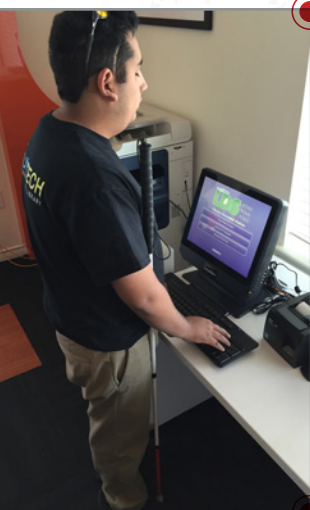
Required volunteer trainings

Work-based Learning Program trainees complete employment training with TWS-VRS and the Lighthouse before they start volunteering at your business.

Self-disclosing disability information: Trainees learn how and when to disclose their disability information. Following new federal guidelines about self-disclosure can help your business become more competitive for government contracts and create a diverse work environment.

Communication in the work place: At the heart of every business is culture. One of the main reasons people do not fit into a work culture is how they communicate with their employer and coworkers. Trainees learn the workplace communications skills they need to obtain and keep employment.

Dressing for success: Trainees learn to understand appropriate attire for their work environment.



Résumés: Trainees learn to target their résumés to employers' needs, based on skills and education, to make a good first impression on potential employers.

Technology and the workplace:

Trainees learn about adaptive technology and how it can be used on the job. TWS-VRS provides technical and, in some instances, financial support for reasonable technology accommodations (such as screen readers, magnifiers, oversized monitors and keyboard).

Social Security employment

incentives: Trainees learn how working might affect their Social Security benefits so they can plan appropriately. One of the goals of the program is to help trainees move from being a Social Security recipient to a taxpayer.

Trainee job duties and responsibilities

Trainees are held to the following duties and responsibilities while placed with your business:

- Perform work in support of the mission, goals and values of the business, duty station or work site.
- Meet the expectations of the business, Lighthouse and TWS-VRS.
- Attend work regularly at the volunteer business partners' host site.
- Work collaboratively as a member of the rehabilitation team.
- Work under the supervision of the duty station management.
- Perform work under general supervision or with a job coach.
- Establish and maintain appropriate business relationships while participating in the training program.
- Have good employment skills, including soft skills and communication skills.
- Coordinate transportation to and from work site.
- Submit accurate time logs and reports on time, consistent with Lighthouse policies and the Work-based Learning Program.
- Report to work site at scheduled times without assistance from the employer or duty station.



Trainee job duties



- Be able to conduct repetitive motions on a daily basis, or assume additional responsibilities, perform additional duties and complete special projects as assigned.
- Maintain regular and consistent contact with TWS-VRS and the Lighthouse.

Your counselor's contact information:

Thank you

for considering partnering with TWS-VRS and the Lighthouse to offer a work-based learning experience to people with disabilities while helping your business achieve its mission and goals.

For more information:

800-628-5115

www.texasworkforce.org

**Texas Workforce Solutions-
Vocational Rehabilitation Services**

**101 East 15th Street
Austin, Texas 78778-0001
800-628-5115**

Equal Opportunity Employer/Program

Auxiliary aids and services are available upon request to individuals with disabilities.

**Relay Texas: 800-735-2989 (TTY)
and 711 (Voice).**

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